

REMARKS

The Office Action of March 26, 2008 has been received and its contents carefully considered.

The present Amendment cancels claim 8 and 13-15. The Amendment also revises claim 1 to further distinguish the invention from the prior art, as will be discussed in more detail below. In addition, the Amendment revises the original claims to improve their form under US claim-drafting practice, and adds new claims 16-21 to further protect the invention. Of these new claims, claim 18 is independent, and the rest are dependent. It is noted that claim 18 refers to "encoding method information," which is not specifically mentioned in the text of this application but is shown in Figure 2 (see "Encoding: base64" between reference numbers 108 and 108').

The present Amendment also corrects the informalities in the specification that are noted on page 2 of the Office Action. Accordingly, the objection should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claim 13 for anticipation by US patent 7,305,440 to Saito. This rejection is now moot because claim 13 has been cancelled.

The Office Action also rejects the remaining claims for obviousness based on Saito. For the reasons discussed below, however, it is respectfully submitted that the independent claims now pending in this application (that is, claims 1 and 17) are patentable over this reference.

The Saito reference is directed to an Internet facsimile apparatus that reduces wasted paper by identifying error mail more accurately than had been done in the past. The reference does this by examining incoming mail based on several conditions (see the paragraph at column 11, lines 17-28), one of which is whether the incoming mail has character streams such as "Demon" or "Delivery" that frequently characterize e-mail that is being returned to its sender (see paragraph at column 2, lines 51-60).

In contrast to Saito's arrangement, claim 1 is now directed to a device "for use by a person to communicate via e-mail messages having a first portion that includes a message ID and having a second portion that includes data." Claim 1 recites "an own information detecting section for detecting information which indicates that the person was the sender of

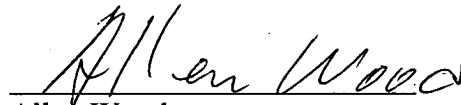
an original e-mail message in a received e-mail message, "by detecting whether the data in the second portion of the received e-mail message includes a message ID that matches a stored message ID" of an e-mail message that the person has sent. It is respectfully submitted that Saito neither discloses nor suggests this technique for identifying an e-mail message that has been returned to its sender.

The independent claim 17 also recites an "own information detecting section" as in claim 1. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the invention defined by claim 17 is also patentable over Saito.

The remaining claims depend from the independent claim 1 or independent claim 17 and recite additional limitations to further define the invention of their independent claim. They are therefore automatically patentable along with their independent claims and need not be further discussed.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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